

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
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FACT SHEET

Open Skies Partnerships: Expanding the Benefits of Freer Commercial Aviation

What are Open Skies Agreements?

Open Skies agreements are bilateral air service agreements the U.S. Government negotiates with other countries to provide rights for airlines to offer international passenger and cargo services. They are pro-consumer, pro-competition, and pro-growth. They include reciprocal obligations to eliminate government interference in commercial airline decisions about routes, capacity, and pricing, so airlines can provide more affordable, convenient, and efficient air service to consumers, promoting increased travel and trade, and facilitating broad economic growth. Open Skies agreements improve flexibility for airline operations, expand cooperative marketing opportunities between airlines, enable global express delivery cargo networks, liberalize charter regulations, and commit both governments to high standards of safety and security.

Growth in Open Skies Partnerships

Since 1992, the United States has established Open Skies relationships with over 120 foreign partners. Recent Open Skies agreements include Ukraine, Serbia, Cote d' Ivoire, Seychelles, Togo, Azerbaijan, Curacao (Kingdom of the Netherlands), Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, the Republic of Congo (Brazzaville), and a modernized air transport agreement with Mexico. Over 70 percent of international departures from the United States now fly to Open Skies partners, which represent 17 of our top 20 passenger markets. We have Open Skies with countries at all levels of economic development, from major economies including Canada, India, Japan, and Republic of Korea to smaller countries such as Cabo Verde, Rwanda, and Brunei. Our agreement with the European Union liberalized one of world's largest international aviation markets.

Impact

- The Brookings Institution estimates that Open Skies agreements add approximately \$4 billion in annual economic gains to consumers. (U.S. Airlines for Open Skies)
- A study by InterVistas estimates that full liberalization of the global aviation market through Open Skies agreements would lead to a 16-percent increase in air traffic and support 9 million jobs in aviation and related industries.
- Open Skies has dramatically expanded the number of direct international connections to cities like Dallas-Fort Worth, Denver, Detroit, Las Vegas, Memphis, Minneapolis, Orlando, Portland, and Salt Lake City. (Airports Council International – North America)

For further information, please contact the Office of Aviation Negotiations: EEB-A-TRA-AN-DL@state.gov, or visit website: www.state.gov/e/eb/tra/